



SEP 13 2001

Dear Tribal Leader:

This is an advance notice of an upcoming project that will involve a comprehensive export of patient registration files from all Indian Health Service (IHS) direct and tribal facilities into the National Patient Information Reporting System (NPIRS).

Ongoing efforts to review, evaluate, and modify patient care data collection and compilation for workload reporting and user population counts have resulted in several recommendations that are expected to improve quality and timeliness. These recommendations are a culmination of the joint efforts of IHS Headquarters, Area, and Data Center staff to find solutions to tribal and Federal concerns.

One recommendation requires all facilities to do a comprehensive patient registration export to reload NPIRS. This recommendation was made when it was determined that an accumulation of problems evolving over time had an adverse effect on data quality in the NPIRS database. The results from this recommendation should correct problems in under and over-counting of user population.

The Patient Registration Re-Export Workgroup, composed of statistical officers and information systems staff from seven Area offices, Data Center staff and Statistics Program staff in Headquarters, are actively involved in developing and coordinating the recommendation and the process. Area representatives have provided valuable insight and input into the process from a local perspective.

This notice should be used as an opportunity to instruct your staff to do patient registration files cleanup or maintenance before the export. Technical information on files cleanup and maintenance is provided in the enclosure.

Our goal is to set a timeframe for the actual export to occur during a two-month period, starting in approximately two to three months. This will provide ample time to develop the process and instructions, perform local files cleanup, and allow the Data Center to prepare for receipt of the files.

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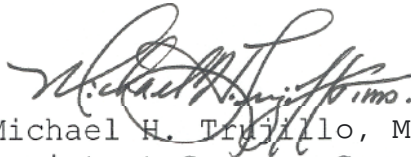
You will receive a formal request to begin this process with the official timeframes, guidelines and instructions. We want to make this process as simple and problem-free as possible.

For RPMS exports this is a very simple process, as standard methods will be employed; the major difference is the size of the file exported. For non-RPMS sites, the degree of work will vary. Every effort will be made to minimize the resources required.

This project should resolve most of the data quality problems identified recently. I recognize the importance of having quality data to justify our requests for resources and to distribute those resources equitably. I look forward to working with you on this project, and ask for your support and cooperation for this effort.

Please contact Ms. Edna Paisano, Principal Statistician Consultant, on (301) 443-1180, if you have questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Michael H. Trujillo, M.D.", is written over the typed name.

Michael H. Trujillo, M.D., M.P.H., M.S.
Assistant Surgeon General
Director

Enclosure

ENCLOSURE

Technical Notes for the Comprehensive Export of Patient Registration Files

Missing or incorrect community of residence information on many of the records results in our inability to assign and count a user to the correct Area/service unit; consequently, the user is not counted in the user population at all.

Please keep in mind that sending accurate data to the NPIRS database ultimately impacts allocation of funds and the resources available for each facility.

Two RPMS patches will help to facilitate cleanup. It is important that these patches be installed promptly.

RPMS Patches

Patch #13 -

Will be distributed shortly, and will include a routine to facilitate correction of erroneous community data on all exports. This routine will generate a "Community/City Mismatch Report" that provides registration staff with a tool to improve the data quality in each RPMS database. If the City and the Community of Residence (Community of Residence being the information that is actually exported to the NPIRS database) do not match; the record should be checked for accuracy and, if necessary, a correction made to the record. The Patch release notes will provide information on how this report should be interpreted and used.

Patch #14 -

Will include the comprehensive patient registration export routine. It will also include an automatic correction to a community pointer problem.

Non-RPMS sites should identify issues relating to the re-export project. They will be assisted by the Patient Registration Re-Export Workgroup, along with Area statistical and information systems staff, who will provide the necessary assistance to complete the project.